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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under Article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Initial report of States parties

Republic of Moldova

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I. Introduction

1. The Republic of Moldova has prepared the present report on its observation of the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, based on the evolution of the situation in this field and in conformity with article 18 of the Convention.

2. The Convention, adopted on 18 December 1979, was ratified by the Republic on 28 April 1994 through a decision of its Parliament, No. 42-XII.

3. Having adhered to this Convention, the Government of the Republic of Moldova has confirmed its will to integrate in the international process of recognition of women's rights, assuming the obligation to undertake measures aimed at ensuring the respective rights through an efficient application of this international tool at the national level.

4. As a consequence the Republic is involved in the process of modifying the women's statute at the national level. This fact was reflected in the creation of a new structure whose task it is to promote and coordinate social policy in the above-mentioned field.

5. Thus, Decree No. 93 of 5 April 1994 of the President of the Republic gave the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family new tasks for the development of the social protection system of the family, including improving the situation of women; the further evolution of the role of women in society in different posts; further collaboration with public opinion on the need to observe women's rights; education on a new way of thinking on the role of women in society, different from the traditional one; as well as the elaboration of new draft laws and model acts on social policy in collaboration with other State structures and non-governmental organizations.

6. There are a number of women's organizations whose main goals are the modification of the women's statute, labour relations and family relationships in the Republic.

7. There is a need for collaboration between various government structures for the efficient application of the provisions of the Convention.

8. Ministries, departments and women's non-governmental organizations active in this field participated in the elaboration of the present report. The report reflects the situation on the period from 1994 to 1998.

II. Overview

A. Demographic situation

9. On 1 January 1998, the population of the Republic of Moldova numbered 4,304,700, 2,247,200 (52.2 per cent) of whom were women.

10. In 1991, for the first time in the post-Soviet period, the population of the Republic started to decrease both as a result of an essential reduction of the birth rate and emigration of the population abroad.

11. During the past seven years, an extremely difficult situation has been created in the Republic. The birth rate decreased from 18.9 to 11.9 live births per thousand inhabitants, while the death rate increased from 9.2 to 11.9 deaths per thousand inhabitants. The current overall birth rate constitutes 1.60, compared with 2.14–2.15, which is necessary for the simple reproduction of the population.

12. The rate of illegitimacy has increased to 17.3 per cent (11.0 per cent in 1990 and 12.3 per cent in 1994). The indicator of marriages (the number of marriages per thousand inhabitants) has decreased during recent years. In 1997, it constituted 6.0 per cent, compared with 9.45 per cent in 1990.

13. One of the most current problems is a high infant mortality rate. The rate of infant mortality in the Republic is four times higher than that of other countries. There has been a slow but persistent decrease in infant mortality, from 22.6 deaths under the age of 1 year per thousand live births in 1994 to 20.0 in 1997.

Population statistics

Year	*Total*	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage of urban population*	*Number of inhabitants per 1 square kilometre*
1994	4 352 700	2 078 300	2 274 400	46.8	128.8
1995	4 347 900	2 076 700	2 271 200	46.8	128.6
1996	4 334 400	2 071 000	2 263 400	46.2	128.2
1997	4 320 000	2 064 500	2 555 500	46.2	127.8
1998	4 304 700	2 057 500	2 247 200	46.2	127.4

Number of women per thousand men

Year	*Total*	*In urban areas*	*In rural areas*
1994	1 094	1 081	1 106
1995	1 094	1 081	1 104
1996	1 093	1 081	1 104
1997	1 093	1 081	1 102
1998	1 092	1 081	1 102

Birth rate

Year	*Live births*	*Death rate*	*Birth rate*
1994	14.3	11.8	2.5
1995	13.0	12.2	0.8
1996	12.0	11.5	0.5
1997	11.9	11.9	0.0

Some demographic indicators specified according to sex

Year	*Number of live male births per thousand live female births*	*Number of dead male births per thousand dead female births*
1994	1 066	1 018
1995	1 061	1 031
1996	1 059	1 045
1997[a]	1 057	1 039

[a] Excluding the Transnistrian region.

14. Two major factors have an impact on the birth rate of the population:

(a) The mortality rate;

(b) Female mortality through suicide.

During the period 1990–1997, mortality increased through mental disorders (2.5 times), active tuberculosis (1.4 times) and complications during pregnancy, birth and the post-natal period (1.3 times). There has also been an increase in fatalities from syphilis (189 deaths per 100,000 women) (13.5 times).

Female mortality through suicide

	Number of dead women	
Year	*Real data*	*Per hundred thousand women*
1994	166	7.30
1995	169	7.46
1996	139	6.15
1997[a]	114	5.98

[a] Excluding the Transnistrian region.

B. Economic situation

15. The Republic has a market economy, which is socially oriented and based on private and public ownership and competition.

16. The transition period to a market economy has been characterized by a serious crisis that has affected all spheres of the national economy: industrial and agricultural production in the Republic has decreased and capital investment and retail sales have declined. Tendencies to increase further consumption prices, as well as those of production spheres have been maintained.

17. Having analysed the situation of previous years, the current period can be divided into two stages:

(a) The first stage (1991–1994), of economic decline, when the annual gross domestic product decreased by 20 per cent;

(b) The second stage (1995–1997), of "depressive stability", with the stopping of the reduction of the annual gross domestic product down to 2.6 per cent.

18. Despite those facts, during those years 56 to 60 per cent of the State budget was allocated to the social sector, with reform having become very expensive: the real income of the population decreased by 40 per cent, salary and pensions arrears increased, the number of unemployed constituted 23,000 to 25,000 (latent unemployment, about 200,000 people), progress of the population decreased by 40 per cent (0.8 per cent in 1990 and 0.05 per cent in 1996), the consumption of the main food groups (meat, dairy products, etc.) decreased by 1.5 to 2 times, while the weight of the expenses for food products in the overall consumption expenses increased (from 35 per cent in 1990 to 49 per cent in 1996). Allocations from the budget for education, medicine and culture have declined considerably. Qualified specialists and employees have emigrated abroad.

19. Generally speaking, favourable conditions have recently been created for the gradual improvement of the national economy. It was envisaged that 1997 would be a "turning point" and, in fact, the expectations have been realized.

20. The year 1997 saw the largest financial allocations for different measures of social protection: over 1.2 billion lei, or 14 per cent of the gross domestic product. The funding from the State budget of the main branches of the social sector was larger compared with 1996: in education, by 6 per cent, health care, by 5 per cent and culture, by 8 per cent.

21. At the same time, the difficult economic and financial situation has had a negative impact on the living standards of the population, primarily on women, as well as other vulnerable categories of people, a fact which was manifested in the following tendencies.

22. During the first half of 1998, 75,900 people (7.2 per cent of the overall number of employees) were fired from enterprises and organizations for different reasons.

23. About 30,800 people began to work half of the work day or half of the work week owing to a reduction in production volume. At 1 April 1998, the number of unemployed constituted 37,600, 56 per cent of whom were women.

24. The average salary in the economic sector of the Republic, adjusted to prices of previous years, corresponded to the salaries of the mid-1960s and in education, culture, art and health care, to the salaries of the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s.

25. The reduction in incomes surpassed the reduction in the main macro-economic indicators.

26. The unfavourable situation in the demographic sector is shown by the fall in the birth rate, the increased mortality and the number of divorces among the population.

27. The longevity of life in the Republic was 67 years of age for men and 73 for women.

28. Taking into account the difficult situation, the State undertook concrete measures which have contributed to improving social protection for some categories of the population:

(a) Attention was paid to finding a solution to problems related to the social protection of the population in connection with the increase in tariffs on energy resources;

(b) Pensioners, disabled people and families with many children who live in private houses, have been provided with fuel and wood at reduced prices.

29. The entire system of social protection and insurance has been reformed to adjust to the new conditions in this field:

(a) A mechanism for conducting household surveys has been elaborated, which gives the possibility to determine objectively the living standard of the population, and to identify individuals and families in need of help and social assistance from the State;

(b) Parliament adopted in the first reading, a law on minimum requirements for existence, which establishes the legal norms of minimal State guarantees and incomes of citizens, and determines the social protection measures needed for the population. A mechanism for the application of these laws has also been elaborated;

(c) A draft law on poverty alleviation is going to be elaborated very soon;

(d) A system of State social privileges is almost completed. The system is currently very expensive and does not correspond to the newly created conditions in society.

C. Political situation

30. Article 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, adopted on 29 July 1994, provides that:

(a) The Republic of Moldova is a sovereign, independent, unitary and indivisible State;

(b) The form of government is State Republic;

(c) The Republic is a democratic State based on law, where human dignity, rights and freedoms, free development of human personality, political right and pluralism are the supreme values.

31. Article 6 of the Constitution stipulates that: in the Republic of Moldova, the legislative, executive and judicial powers are separate and collaborate together in exerting their prerogatives according to the stipulations of the Constitution.

32. The judicial power in the Republic is implemented by Parliament and includes 101 members of Parliament. Parliament is elected for four years, which can be prolonged through organic law in case of war or catastrophe.

33. Parliament has its own tasks, including tasks related to the ratification of international treaties signed by the Government.

34. The President of the Republic has a representative function and is the chief of State, being the guarantor of sovereignty, national independence, territorial unity and integrity of the country.

35. The Government ensures the implementation of the external and internal policies of the State and is responsible for the general management of public administration.

36. Justice is carried out according to law by judicial organizations (article 114 of the Constitution).

37. Any of the three branches of power (legislative, executive and judicial) is independent of the others and the connections between them is merely functional.

III. Implementation of the Convention, 1994–1998

Articles 1–3. Political measures for the elimination of discrimination against women

38. From the point of view of the regulations in force, the women's statute in the Republic does not represent an impediment for its presence and promotion in the framework of new democratic institutions, created after the declaration of independence on 27 August 1991. The Constitution of the Republic is the fundamental support on which all State legislation is based: the provision that all citizens of the Republic are equal before the law and public authorities, notwithstanding race, nationality, ethnical origin, language, religion, sex, opinion, political belonging, fortune or social origin.

39. Regulations that stipulate the equality of all citizens before the law are included in other normative acts as well. Thus, according to the Penal Code, the Civil Code and the Code on Marriage and the Family the wife does not need the husband's consent while addressing the Court, except when common interests are involved, for example, common ownership.

40. Women's rights are considered part of the regulations on human rights.

41. Article 48 of the Constitution stipulates:

(a) The family constitutes the natural and fundamental element of society and has the right to be protected by society and the State;

(b) The family is created through free marriage between a man and a woman, based on their equality of rights and the right and obligation of parents to ensure the raising, education and teaching of children;

(c) The conditions for entering into and dissolving the marriage are established by law;

(d) Children are obliged to take care of parents and to help them.

42. Article 50 (paras. 1–3) of the Constitution provides for the protection of mothers and her children:

(a) A mother and her child have the right to special aid and protection. All children, including those born to single mothers, have the right to social protection;

(b) Children and youths enjoy a special regime of assistance in the implementation of their rights;

(c) The State provides the necessary allowances for children and assistance in the care of sick or disabled children. Other forms of social assistance for children and youths are established by the law.

43. Public authorities create conditions for the free participation of youths in the social, economic, cultural and sportive life of the country.

44. Protection of human rights is implemented by the legal bodies. The legal procedure requires that the interested parties inform the legal bodies about cases of encroachment upon rights. Every citizen who thinks that his/her rights have been encroached upon can request the interference of the respective State bodies.

45. Taking into account the need to guarantee all citizens the right to the protection of their rights and freedoms, Parliament adopted Law No. 1349-XIII on 17 October 1997 on parliamentary advocates.

46. Parliamentary advocates contribute to the solution of human rights related problems, improvement of the legislation in the field of human rights protection and legal training of the population. the adherence of the Republic of Moldova to international conventions and other international legislative acts constitute a political measure for the elimination of discrimination.

47. Given that the Republic is a member of the international Covenant Pact on Civil and Political Rights, ratified by the decision of Parliament No. 217-XII of 28 August 1990 and of the European Convention on Human Rights, ratified through the decision of Parliament No. 1298-XIII of 24 July 1997, citizens of the Republic of Moldova can submit applications on human rights to the European Court, in conformity with the stipulations of the international acts mentioned above.

Article 4. Special temporary measures to accelerate equality between women and men

48. The family depends on the society in which it is being formed and its evolution is determined and conditioned by the organization method of the society, the State.

49. Mothers enjoy special attention from the State and are guaranteed maternity leave, medical assistance, favourable conditions for work and other facilities stipulated in the Labour Code of the Republic (articles 175 and 178).

50. In addition to maternity leave, a woman is granted additional leave, without preserving her salary, to care for a child until the age of three years, but her job is preserved during the leave (article 175).

51. This leave can be used integrally or partly, any time, up to the age of 3 of the child.

52. Partially paid leave to care for a child can be also used by the father, grandmother, grandfather or other relative of the child, who takes care of the child.

53. Women and men have equal rights in all fields: economic, political, social and cultural. The achievement of those rights is ensured by offering equal possibilities in the economic, social, social-political and cultural fields, as well as through the implementation of special measures to protect women's work, and the creation of conditions that allow for the successful combination of work and child care.

54. The principle of equality of men and women is a reality in the territory of the Republic; employment serves as an argument for this statement.

55. The main index is the equal remuneration for work of equal value. The Republic has ratified 18 conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Convention No. 100 on Equal Remuneration of Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value will soon be finished and presented. One of the main principles of equality in the field of employment stipulates the equality of remuneration for work of equal value.

56. This principle refers to the quantum of fixed remuneration, without discrimination related to sex.

57. The Labour Code stipulates a special chapter on women's work, which prohibits work by women in hard conditions, underground work, except in jobs that do not require hard physical effort, such as in sanitary or social services.

58. A list of hard work and of work under dangerous conditions, on which women are prohibited to work, is approved by law.

59. It is also prohibited to make women lift loads that surpass established maximum norms.

60. The labour legislation denies companies the right to refuse to hire women or decreasing their salaries owing to pregnancy or to the existence of children under the age of 3 years, or to refuse to hire single mothers if they have children under the age of 13 (for disabled children, the age limit is 16).

61. The dismissal of women in the above-mentioned category, except in cases of the total liquidation of the enterprise, institution or organization, is prohibited.

Article 5. Roles of women and men in society and related stereotypes

62. Women involved in a professional activity carry out a large volume of work at home. For women in the Republic of Moldova, the double working day is typical and is considered normal. Many women work very hard and under conditions dangerous to health, in particular in agriculture.

63. The unstable social-economic situation in the country, and the increase in unemployment and in the number of persons socially vulnerable affects the micro-climate of the family and women.

64. As a result, the number of cases of violence in the family, whose victims are women and children, are constantly increasing. Unfortunately, it is very difficult for the State to control violence in the family, usually because the authorities are informed only in the most complicated situations, the others being considered as family conflicts.

65. Chapter 2 of the Penal Code provides for the following methods of punishment:

(a) Under article 88, murder committed in serious circumstances is punished by detention either for life or for 10 to 25 years;

(b) Under article 94, a person who commits or attempts to commit suicide is punished by a term of from one to five years imprisonment;

(c) Under articles 95, 96 and 97, persons who commit damages on purpose to the body, depending on the degree of damages, receive up to 25 years imprisonment;

(d) Under article 101, systematic beating or other forms of torture are punished by deprivation of liberty up to 3 years;

(e) Under paragraph 1 of article 102, sexual relations by physical force, or by taking advantage of the weakness of a person, is punished by a term from 3 to 7 years. According to paragraph 5 of the same article, rape which had serious consequences, as well as violation of a girl under the age of 14 years, is punished by a life sentence or a term from 10 to 25 years;

(f) Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the age of 16 is punished by a term of from 2 to 6 years, under article 103;

(g) Article 105 provides for a term of from 1 to 5 years for forcing a woman to have sexual intercourse.

66. In order to make an exhaustive study of the position of women in society, it is important to mention the statistical data on crimes whose victims were women. In 1994, 267 rapes were reported and 222 suspects were apprehended (276 and 262 respectively in 1996). In the first quarter of 1998, 71 rapes were reported and 65 suspects arrested. In the majority of rapes, the offenders were men aged 17–35 years.

67. There has been an increase in the number of rapes of minors, committed in groups, and rapes of people under the age of 16 years. During the first three months of 1998, 10 minors were victims of rape compared with 30 in the whole of 1994.

68. Rape accounts for the largest percentage of all crimes committed against the person, with arrests amounting to 71.0 per cent in 1994, 75.0 per cent in 1996 and 78.9 per cent in the first quarter of 1998; and deliberate murder to 71.2, 71.3 and 77.0 percent respectively; while the percentage of rape arrests increased from 76.4 per cent in 1994 to 91.5 per cent the first quarter of 1998.

69. During the past few years there has been an increase in the number of kidnapped children (article 113 of the Penal Code), from 3 in 1994 to 17 in the first quarter of 1998.

70. For the implementation of the provisions of the declaration and the Convention, legislative acts relating to the fight against crime and the protection of the legal order were modified in the period 1991–1998, with the legislation in force being adjusted to the provisions of the international law.

71. Thus, 30 articles that contravened international law and violated human rights have been excluded from the Penal Code. Article 22 on capital punishment and articles 25 and 26, which provided measures for banishment and deportation, have been excluded as well.

72. Currently, chapter 11 of the Penal Code on offences against life, health, freedom and dignity of the person provides 35 articles that determine the punishments to be implemented for the committed offences.

73. Chapter 4 concerns socially dangerous actions related to offences against political rights, the right to work and other citizens' rights (22 articles).

74. The above-mentioned provisions do not have any restrictions relating to sex or discrimination against women but, on the contrary, these articles provide protection against violated rights: article 71 of the Penal Code on encroachment upon national and racial equality, article 101 on torture, article 102 on violation, article 103 on sexual intercourse with a person under the age of 16, article 105 on forcing a woman to have sexual intercourse, article 132, paragraph 2, on hindrance on the right to vote, article 222 on maintenance of brothels and article 140 on refusal to hire or firing a pregnant women, as well as of a mother who is breastfeeding her child, etc.

75. Articles 110, 112, 112, paragraph 1, 112, paragraph 3, and 113 of the Penal Code provide the compulsory measures in cases where children's rights are violated.

76. From 1994 to the first three months of 1998 the number of women participating or the commission of crimes varied from 9 to 11 per cent of the overall number of offenders and in some categories of offences, the percentage of women participating is increasing, thereby forcing the State bodies to undertake measures for improvement.

77. The number of murders committed with the participation of women is increasing. In 1994, their number constituted 11.2 per cent and in 1998 16.4 per cent. The number of cases of serious damage to the body increased from 7.9 to 10 per cent. The number of women who participate in committing economic offences is considerable and every fourth offender is a woman.

78. The attraction of women to the drug business is of growing concern. During the past 10 years, the number of persons illegally using drugs increased 20 times and their number now constitutes 50,000.

79. In April 1998, the police arrested 3,064 people, 33 per cent of them women. This phenomena has a latent character with a tendency to increase.

Article 6. Exploitation of prostitution and trafficking in women

80. A dangerous social vice that has been extended throughout the Republic and taken on large proportions is female drug addiction and exploitation with the aim of prostitution and sadistic and violent propaganda.

81. The legislation of the Republic provides for terms between 1 and 10 years, with or without the confiscation of property. Also, it stipulates other forms of punishment for procuring, organizing and maintaining premises for procurement and prostitution, as well as for organizing and maintaining premises for drug use (articles 222 and 225, paras. 1–7 of the Criminal Code).

82. For prostitution, the legislation provides only administrative punishment in the form of a fine which amounts to five times the minimum wage (article 17, para. 1, of the Code on the administrative of minor offence).

83. Exploitation of prostitution and trafficking in women constitute a new problem. These social weaknesses have spread rapidly. One hundred fifty-one persons were arrested by the police for prostitution in 1997, and 75 in the first three months of 1998, including 66 from Chisinau municipality. One of the causes contributing to the increase in the number of persons engaged in prostitution is the mass media, through which private firms providing different services as a cover for prostitution are advertised.

84. Recently mobile groups of prostitutes have appeared. During 1996–1998 police returned to the country 15 women who had been sent to Bulgaria, Poland and Greece for purposes of prostitution.

85. Taking this situation into consideration, the Ministry of Internal Affairs submitted to the Government in 1998 amendments to the legislation covering penalties for offences in the sphere of social morality, for example, prostitution and procurement. The Ministry is continuously undertaking all possible action with the aim of life, health, rights, liberty and protection of women.

Article 7. Participation of women in political and public life

86. From the point of view of the legislation in force, the status of women in the Republic does not represent an obstacle for their promotion within the new democratic institutions, created after the declaration of independence. The Constitution of the Republic provides that its legislation regarding the rights and liberty of its citizens will be interpreted and carried out in compliance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, without regard to sex.

87. The right of a person to take part in the elections is provided for in article 38 of the Constitution, which says:

(a) The will of the people constitutes the base of State power. This will is represented by free elections which take place periodically through a universal, equal, direct, secret and freely expressed vote;

(b) The citizens of the Republic have the right to vote from the age of 18 years, reached before and including the day of elections, except those who have received a civil death penalty pursuant to procedures provided by law;

(c) The right to be elected is guaranteed to the citizens of the Republic pursuant to the law.

88. Through ratification of the conventions on the political rights of women (in force in the Republic since 26 April 1993) and on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (in force in the Republic since 31 July 1994), as well as ILO Convention No. 103 on Maternity Protection (in force for the Republic since 14 February 1998), the Republic expressed its agreement with the principles covered therein.

89. Women's rights have been specified in numerous legislative acts: on basic rights and liberty, the vote, participation in administration, access to education, job promotion, security, equal wages, social protection, equality in the family, etc.

90. In this context, the Republic considers that although it has implemented specific legislation in this sphere, the position of women continues to remain complicated and to be unsatisfactory in comparison to that of men.

91. For the time being, women face difficulties and obstacles regarding integration into the new labour market. There is a tendency to prefer men or women without family obligations. As a rule, enterprises with a large financial deficit are not eager to hire women, so that they can avoid expenses on maternity leave, illnesses of children, compensations to families with many children, families with low incomes, etc.

92. Of the total number of unemployed persons registered at 1 June 1998, 56.5 per cent were women.

93. There is a real problem of promotion of women within the decision-making bodies. Although they constitute 52 per cent of the total population of the country, women have only 8 of the 101 seats in Parliament. The present number is an increase of 4.9 per cent compared with the rate in the previous Parliament. The number of women vice-ministers decreased from nine to six. The number of women mayors of villages, communities and towns has increased to 99. Nevertheless, the number of women in administrative bodies remains insignificant. None of the ministers is a woman and there are only two women directors of departments.

94. Another major problem is the physical condition of women, which is rather precarious and, in its turn, influences the health of children.

95. Therefore, the maternal death rate was 40.2 for 100,000 newborn babies in 1996, which is 5.8 times higher than the European rate.

96. In first place in the structure of infant mortality are before-birth causes at 40 per cent, with the indices at 20.2 per 1,000 newborn babies.

97. The Republic needs to institute some specific measures aimed at ensuring the equal and active involvement of women and men in the political life of the country during the transition period. At the same time, the training of women in all aspects of political life cannot be successful without first resolving a large number of vital problems, such as the realization of specific problems, changing attitudes towards women managers, the promotion of principles regarding the redistribution of family duties, respect for human rights, the elimination of violence against women, in public as well as private, the implementation of educational programmes on special sanitary issues, and the equal participation of both sexes in home activities and the rearing of children.

98. Starting with the recommendations of the United Nations and taking into consideration the final documents of the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing, the Government approved a plan of top priority measures for changing the situation of women in society (resolution No. 39 of 15 January 1998).

Article 8. Representation and participation of women at the international level

99. In the framework of representation at the international level, 66 women from the Ministry of External Affairs, including the diplomatic missions, have been trained,

including a permanent representative in the Council of Europe, a counsellor-minister, 2 first secretaries, 2 second secretaries, 1 third secretary and 16 administrative/technical officials.

Article 9. Nationality of married women

100. The Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Moldova, No. 596 of 5 June 1991 was enacted pursuant to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. According to that Law equal rights are granted to all persons without regard to sex.

101. Article 18 of the Law stipulates that marriage between a national (male or female) of the Republic and an alien, as well as divorce among such persons, does not affect the nationality of either spouse, in the event that international agreements concluded by the Republic do not provide otherwise.

102. Chapter II, article 9, of the same Law sets out the procedure for acquiring citizenship of the Republic of Moldova: birth, adoption, repatriation received through application or reintegration of the citizenship of the Republic of Moldova.

Article 10. Education

103. In the field of education, measures have been undertaken in the Republic for the elimination of discrimination against women and for granting equal rights with men regarding access to education under the same educational conditions (exams, textbooks, programmes, scholarships, physical education, etc.), and health services. Some positive tendencies have been observed.

104. During the past few years there has been an increase in the number of women receiving higher education; amounting to 55.7 per cent in 1997, compared with 55.3 per cent in 1996. In 1997 the rate of women with higher education qualifications increased, constituting 15.7 per cent for one thousand citizens, and 14.6 per cent in 1996. The number of female teachers in primary and secondary school increased by 1 per cent to 80 per cent compared with 1996. In 1996, 52 per cent of the total number of post-graduate students were women (55.3 per cent in 1997).

105. More than half of the teaching staff of the Republic are women. This fact is significant for professional prestige, but constitutes a social disadvantage.

106. Article 6 of the Law on Education stipulates that the right to education is guaranteed, despite nationality, sex, race, age, original and social state, political membership and penal background.

107. Educational standards stipulate minimal obligatory requirements for different levels and steps of education, without regard to sex.

108. The basic curriculum, pursuant to which the subject curriculum for pre-university education is under elaboration, is based on fundamental principles regarding general human, social and cultural values. Tolerance, honesty and balance are stressed in policies on the formation of the next generation.

109. In pre-school and primary education, where the majority of workers are women, employment can be interrupted through the closing of schools or periodical down time. In 1993, there were 1,877 pre-school institutions, and 1,480 at 1 April 1998. There is no

social security in terms of unemployment compensation and in the event of a temporary interruption in work activity, privileges based on working experience, pensions and sick leave are lost. Some 392 kindergartens were not functioning during the winter period. This fact caused forced vacations for approximately 3,000 teaching specialists.

110. The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions (article 11 (j)) is directly connected with the economic crisis in the country. In poor conditions measures to improve the conditions of the teaching staff, carried out automatically in previous years, were cancelled. Lack of heating at the workplace and underestimation and delayed or non-payment of salaries make it necessary to draft measures on health and financial protection of the teaching staff.

111. The right to access to information regarding children's education that would allow them to exercise those rights cannot be implemented for the time being because of lack of special literature and programmes on family collaboration, etc. It is necessary to open centres offering psychological advice to parents and to elaborate teaching support programmes for parents.

112. Because article 6 of the Law on Education is not directly followed, the Republic is now facing a situation where half of the trained staff are women. Although there is a tendency for women to dominate teaching activity, it is a disadvantage on the labour market.

Female college students by field of study
(at the beginning of academic year)

	Number of women				*Percentage of women*			
	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Total	**17 770**	**18 150**	**18 742**	**18 712**	**55**	**58**	**56**	**57**
Number/percentage attending morning courses	15 810	16 547	17 172	17 131	57	59	57	57
Field of study								
Industry	2 760	2 951	3 055	2 945	44	47	48	50
Construction	317	344	370	340	22	23	25	24
Law	17	816	1 263	1 930	1	60	39	45
Transport and communication	519	583	525	389	21	24	21	15
Agriculture	1 370	1 429	1 531	1 528	32	34	35	37
Economy	2 231	1 846	2 218	2 873	67	72	69	70
Health protection	4 574	4 176	4 000	3 430	88	87	89	90
Education	4 890	4 979	4 741	4 117	93	92	92	92
Art and cinema	807	740	763	692	48	49	52	51

113. The rate of female students comprises 55 per cent of the total in high school and 57 per cent in colleges. The majority of students study at educational institutions and health care institutions (66 per cent and 90 per cent respectively).

Female students in high schools by field of study
(at the beginning of academic year)

	Number				Percentage of the total number of students			
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1994	1995	1996	1997
Total	**27 135**	**29 974**	**31 969**	**36 089**	**55**	**55**	**55**	**55**
Number/percentage attending morning courses	19 098	21 554	23 355	25 866	55	55	55	55
Field of study								
Industry	2 786	2 999	2 928	3 340	31	34	33	34
Agriculture	1 807	1 851	1 828	1 913	32	32	33	35
Law	74	233	390	862	3	10	14	23
Economy	3 217	4 264	5 044	5 575	61	58	58	57
Health protection	3 284	3 043	2 639	2 464	66	65	64	66
Physical culture and sport	243	239	242	248	19	19	19	19
Education	13 782	14 801	14 685	17 371	77	75	76	73
Art and cinema	914	888	958	1 033	53	54	60	62

Article 11. Women's situation in the labour market and measures on social security in the event of unemployment

114. The right to work and work protection is called for in article 43 of the Constitution and stipulates:

(a) Any person has the right to work and to free choice of work on equitable and satisfactory working terms, as well as to protection against unemployment;

(b) Employees have the right to work protection. Measures of protection call for security of occupational hygiene, a working schedule for women and young people, weekly days off, paid vacation, provisions for work in difficult conditions, as well as for other specific situations.

115. Article 47 of the Constitution states that:

(a) The State is committed to taking measures for any person to have a decent level of life that would ensure his, and his family's, health and well-being, including food, clothing, place of living, medical care, as well as the necessary social services;

(b) In the event of unemployment, citizens have the right to insurance for unemployment, illness, disablement, old age or other cases where they have lost the ability to earn a living through no fault of their own.

116. The above-mentioned constitutional provisions do not specify the difference between men and women, because the equality of men and women results from the provisions of article 16 of the Constitution.

117. As a result, the terms "a citizen" and "a person", used in articles 43 and 47 refer equally to men and women.

118. The main legislative act in the field of labour and employment is the Labour Code which was approved in 1973 based on labour legislation of the former Soviet Union.

119. Modifications and major amendments have been made to the present legislation. The need to draft a new labour code was brought about by social and economic changes that

have taken place in the Republic during the past few years, including democratization of the society, changes resulting from a market economy, as well as a need to improve the labour legislation in compliance with the new Constitution and with international conventions and agreements to which the Republic is a party.

120. The new draft labour code provides, in a separate chapter, additional guarantees for women and persons with family obligations.

121. The draft labour code was submitted for analyses to a committee of independent experts of the European Social Court within the Council of Europe.

Measures on social protection of the unemployed

122. The population of the Republic affected by unemployment is protected through Law No. 878-XII regarding utilization of the labour force, approved by Parliament on 21 January 1992. The legislation provides a number of social guarantees for the unemployed and for the exclusion of discrimination against women. Pursuant to the legislative acts in force, persons affected by unemployment benefit from employment services, training in professional courses and public paid jobs, the right to unemployment assistance and other social payments for a period of up to nine calendar months. Unemployment compensation is paid to persons unemployed as a result of changes in the system of production and labour, including liquidation, reorganization or restructuring of enterprises and reductions in the number of staff; and to employees whose contract of work has expired; graduates of the educational institutions who have reached the age of 18; and young people who have completed military or alternative service, etc. Also, pursuant to the new law, women who care for children under the age of 3 years and are not employed benefit from this right despite the reason for dismissal.

Dynamics of unemployment, 1994–1997

	1994		*1995*		*1996*		*1997*	
	Total	*Women*	*Total*	*Women*	*Total*	*Women*	*Total*	*Women*
Applied for assistance	38 684	20 891	45 365	24 815	46 333	24 647	49 518	26 526
Offered a job	11 020	4 919	16 480	7 098	19 573	8 466	21 078	9 808
Attended a training course	2 723	1 992	5 188	3 294	5 436	3 517	6 749	4 636
Benefited from unemployment assistance	14 881	9 841	19 747	13 677	19 563	14 187	18 180	13 245

123. According to the table above, 50 per cent of the total unemployed were women; they were offered a job; attended a professional training course or were granted unemployment help. Therefore, legislation in force does not discriminate against or limit women, but on the contrary provides some privileges in the event of losing a job.

124. At 1 May 1998, 37,550 unemployed persons were registered in employment offices throughout the Republic, including 21,076 women (56 per cent). Of the total number, 11,321 (8,196 women, or 72.4 per cent) were granted unemployment assistance. The number of unemployed persons who attended professional courses amounted to 3,259 (of which 2,013 were women, or 61.8 per cent). Some 412 unemployed persons, including 233 women (56.6 per cent), were involved in public paid works.

125. The Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, after thoroughly examining the situation regarding social protection of the unemployed and taking into consideration

the recommendations of the European Union programme of Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) relating to services for the labour force in the Republic, ILO conventions and the experience of highly developed countries, drafted a Law on Modification and Completion of the Law on Employment, which was approved by Parliament on 17 December 1997.

126. In the amendments and modifications to article 13 of the Law on Employment, as approved, all characteristics, conditions and specific restrictions existing in the Republic were taken into consideration.

127. The main changes brought about by the modifications, which came into force on 5 March 1998, include the following:

(a) Extending the categories of beneficiaries of unemployment assistance, including unemployed women caring for children up to the age of 14 and disabled persons. As a result of the above-mentioned amendments the most disadvantaged categories of unemployed, who were affected more during the period of transition to a market economy and face difficulties in finding a job, will be protected;

(b) Extending financial support to those experiencing a temporary period of unemployment, including those on maternity leave;

(c) A single financial payment in the event of the death of an unemployed person;

(d) Implementing new registration procedures and granting assistance to the unemployed by extending the period of application to employment offices for graduates and young people registered with the armed forces reserves from 90 calendar days to 6 calendar months. Implementation of this modification will increase the number of beneficiaries among graduates and young people after army service.

128. Taking into consideration the difficult economic and budgetary situation, an increase in unemployment assistance was made for the categories whose financial help amounts to the minimum wage, from 75 per cent of the minimum wage to two times the minimum wage. This help will be granted to unemployed graduates of educational institutions, persons who have completed military or alternative service and persons released from jail and social rehabilitation institutions. This provision was implemented on the proposal of the Republican Commission on Joint Negotiations.

129. With the aim of financially supporting unemployed women with children up to the age of 16 years, steps were taken to increase the unemployment assistance by 10 to 20 per cent.

130. During the past few years there has appeared a category of unemployed who refuse to accept offered jobs or do not look for a job. In this case, unemployment assistance is decreased by 15 per cent every two to three months for a period of nine calendar months.

131. Unemployed persons whose payment period has expired, can receive, on request, financial help from local budgets, from funds allocated with the aim of providing social support to the population. The procedure for granting financial help and deciding the amounts to be paid is implemented by the local public administrative authorities.

132. On the proposal of the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and the Family, the Government approved resolution No. 39 of 15 January 1998 containing a plan for top-priority actions regarding improving the situation of women and increasing their role in society, which included:

(a) Creating a permanent commission on the situation of women within the Government;

(b) Conducting a comparative study of national and international legislation, focusing on the principle of equal opportunities for women and men in a society;

(c) Monitoring actions aimed at improving the situation of women in public life in conformity with the documents approved at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

133. This action plan includes protecting the social-economic rights of women through:

(a) The elaboration of a mechanism to stimulate the economic entities aimed at creating new job opportunities for women, in particular women who have to take care of their children;

(b) The development of an information system for women, providing access to knowledge and opportunities in the fields of administration, entrepreneurship and management;

(c) The elaboration of measures for the support of unemployed women who are the sole support of the family and of the families where both parents are unemployed;

(d) The creation of an organized system whereby women can work in the home;

(e) The approval of measures on professional re-training aimed at the urgent eradication of female unemployment.

134. According to the data of the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and the Family, there were 472,000 female pensioners at the beginning of 1998 (see table below), which is 62 per cent of the total number of pensioners. During the past four years, their number increased by 1,400. Every fourth woman in the Republic is a pensioner.

Distribution of pensioners according to sex (at 1 January)

	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*
Total	**746 702**	**750 556**	**754 653**	**757 020**
Men	275 913	279 142	282 799	284 816
Women	470 789	471 414	471 854	472 204

135. At 1 January 1998, the number of employed women constituted 571,000, which is 148,000 people less compared with 1 January 1994. The number of employed women has been constant during the past few years.

136. The number of unemployed women increased by 27 per cent in 1997 compared with 1994.

Number of employees according to type of economic activity at 1 January

	1997		*1998*	
	Total	*Women*	*Total*	*Men*
Total	**1 187 476**	**617 666**	**1 103 565**	**571 163**
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	515 499	230 716	434 233	196 717
Fishing	809	90	755	87
Industry	176 359	85 545	162 707	74 906
Exploitation of quarries	3 936	567	3 374	467
Processing industry	150 038	79 472	138 509	69 315
Electric power, gas and water	22 385	5 506	20 824	5 124
Construction	39 382	8 748	39 855	7 737
Wholesale and retail trade	54 647	32 996	47 702	29 337
Hotels and restaurants	5 932	4 676	10 168	8 221
Transport, storage and communication	61 197	18 435	59 444	17 355
Financial activities	9 398	6 643	8 209	5 292
Real estate transactions	31 653	13 331	28 589	12 547
Public administration, defence and obligatory social assistance	30 757	17 891	48 623	19 765
Education	147 031	111 440	149 701	113 107
Health care and social assistance	90 859	73 719	88 591	72 581
Other activities related to common, social and personal services	23 953	13 436	24 988	13 511

Number of employees by sector of the national economy (at 1 January)

	1995		1996	
	Total	Women	Total	Men
Total	**1 351 016**	**718 813**	**1 280 016**	**663 907**
Industry	197 909	103 134	177 880	90 508
Agriculture	576 909	264 982	567 905	251 316
Forestry	4 074	956	4 077	879
Transportation	50 797	9 779	47 004	9 270
Telecommunications	15 982	10 022	15 611	9 647
Construction	55 773	13 982	48 073	11 803
Commerce and public nourishment	59 142	44 855	45 650	34 030
Technical/material supply and trade	6 546	2 290	5 796	1 957
Acquisitions	4 453	3 191	6 452	2 552
Information and calculation services	1 790	1 390	1 438	1 105
General commercial activity for ensuring the functioning of the market	236	94	261	102
Environment and exploitation of soil, hydrometeorology and geodesic services	879	524	964	563
Other types of activity in the field of material production	8 177	2 546	7 211	1 773
Utilities and housing	25 385	8 400	24 485	7 687
Non-productive types of social services	12 051	8 757	9 494	6 438
Health care, sports and social assistance	96 644	76 639	93 544	71 692
Education	157 664	126 798	154 751	123 214
Culture and art	21 261	10 949	19 726	11 163
Science and scientific services	10 488	5 172	9 546	5 504
Bank activity, credit and insurance	9 963	7 363	9 673	6 989
Administration	29 671	16 114	29 881	16 434
Public organizations	1 922	876	591	231

Composition of registered unemployed persons (at 1 January)

	1994		1995		1996		1997	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
Total	**14 113**	**8 857**	**20 554**	**12 850**	**24 543**	**16 078**	**23 426**	**15 872**
Fired as a result of the liquidation and reorganization of enterprises and units	7 309	5 060	10 232	7 052	13 180	9 614	11 880	8 859
Dismissed from institutions of social rehabilitation	52	3	98	5	68	6	42	1
Graduates of higher educational institutions	245	138	255	144	301	174	381	229
Other	6 507	3 656	9 969	5 649	10 994	6 284	11 123	6 783

Employment of registered unemployed people
(thousands)

	1994		1995		1996		1997	
	Total	*Women*	*Total*	*Women*	*Total*	*Women*	*Total*	*Women*
Number of people seeking employment at beginning of year	38.7	20.9	45.4	24.8	46.3	24.6	49.5	26.5
Out of which worked:								
As workers	22.3	11.0	25.8	12.7	26.6	12.7	27.7	12.6
As employees	9.3	6.5	10.1	6.7	9.0	5.9	11.3	7.5
Number of people employed:	11.0	4.9	16.5	7.1	19.6	8.5	21.1	9.8
As employees	1.8	1.2	3.0	1.7	3.1	2.0	3.7	2.3
Number of unemployed at end of year	20.6	12.9	24.5	16.1	23.4	15.9	28.0	17.8

Article 12. Women's health

137. The Government undertook a series of measures in the field of health care to improve medical assistance to women and children. A national programme for the improvement of medical assistance for 1997–2002 was adopted which stipulates the implementation of new technologies of assistance to pregnant women, adequate control, reduction of mortality, etc. As a result of these measures, positive results have been achieved. In 1997, infant mortality was reduced by 2 per cent per thousand live births; at the same time, it had maintained at a still high level — 19.8 cases. The birth rate of the population has increased by 0.7 persons per thousand.

138. In the Republic, medical care is free of charge. The introduction of private medicine is ongoing. During the transition period, the free health care system has faced difficulties caused by the economic and financial crisis in the country. Financial allocations for medical services have been considerably reduced. The State budget covered only 35 per cent of the needs of the health care system for 1995 (4 per cent of the gross national product, which constitutes 316 million lei) and 64 per cent for 1997. The majority of medical institutions, except the republican ones, function on the basis of local government funding and are facing difficulties owing to the lack of funds to purchase medical equipment and medicines, as well as the means to provide partial coverage during the curative process, including food for the patients. The market economy envisages reforms in the State medical system which will include private medicine and medical insurance coverage.

Medical assistance for mothers and children

139. The Law on Health Care is based on the principle of non-discrimination. The above-mentioned Law and the Law on the Rights of Children (adopted in 1994) set out the provisions for medical assistance to pregnant women, mothers and children.

140. The economic crisis has reduced access to qualified and specialized medical assistance. Taking into account the fact that 53.3 per cent of the population of the country lives in rural areas and given the lack of transport, telephones and fuel for farms and

hospitals, the majority of pregnant women have access only to village medical facilities. Thus, in 1997, only 71.2 per cent of women up to 12 weeks pregnant were receiving prenatal care. One fourth of pregnant women do not have medical examinations which increases the risk for both mother and child.

141. The above-mentioned serves as a good background to restructure the system of primary medicine by training family doctors in the field of medical assistance and by implementing pilot projects in some localities.

142. Most births take place at maternity centres. By 1994, maternal mortality had been reduced to 23.6 per 100,000 live births, compared with 51.3 in 1992. By 1997 however, the rate had started to increase, constituting 48.3 per 100,000 live births, which is too high compared with Western European countries. The main reasons of this phenomena are diseases of the reproductive organs, infections and toxic complications, abortions and haemorrhages. The largest number of deaths occurred in women 20 to 24 years of age.

Maternal mortality according to age
(Percentages)

	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Total	**16**	**23**	**20**	**22**
Under 20 years of age	2	1	3	5
Over 35 years of age	5	10	7	8

Structure of maternal mortality according to age
(Percentages)

	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Total per hundred thousand live births	**23.6**	**37.1**	**40.2**	**48.3**
Under 20 years of age	12.5	4.3	15.0	22.7
20–34 years of age	56.2	52.2	50.0	40.9
Over 35 years of age	31.3	43.5	35.0	6.4

143. Of equal importance are the unfavourable conditions of living and work, insufficient nourishment and unsatisfactory preventive medical care for women.

144. The Law on Work prohibits women from working under hard and dangerous conditions and from lifting heavy loads and provides certain allowances to pregnant women and mothers who are breastfeeding their children. According to statistical data, 14,300 women are working in conditions that do not correspond to the sanitary-hygienic norms, including 10,800 women working in industry, 2,600 women in commerce and public nourishment and 900 women in other sectors. The working conditions in the tobacco and wine-making industries, where the air is polluted with harmful gases and steam, leave much to be desired. As far as pregnant women are concerned, it is worth mentioning that, unfortunately, they have to work at all stages in the processing of tobacco.

145. As a result of these factors, diseases of the reproductive organs and anaemia among pregnant women increased by more than 3 times during the past 10 years and constituted 45 per cent in 1997.

Diseases of the reproductive organs and anaemia among pregnant women
(Percentages)

	1984	*1990*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Diseases of the reproductive organs	17.4	30.9	51.0	55.8	57.7	61.1
Anaemia	12.4	24.9	37.7	41.1	44.0	45.0

146. The social-economic changes in the Republic are responsible for the high level of infant mortality, which has been decreasing during the past few years.

Cases of death of children under 1 year

	1993	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Total	**1 437**	**1 422**	**1 214**	**1 065**	**901**
Rural areas	1 123	1 119	937		743
Urban areas	314	303	277		158

Infant mortality of children under 1 year per thousand live births

	1990	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Total	**19.01**	**21.5**	**22.6**	**21.2**	**20.2**	**19.8**
Rural areas	18.3	17.0	22.0	16.6	17.8	18.7
Urban areas	17.9		25.1		24.9	25.8

147. Some changes have occurred in the structure of infant mortality:

	Percentage
Prenatal complications	36.6
Respiratory infections	23.9
Congenital anomalies	21.3
Traumas and intoxication	6.3
Infectious diseases	5.8

148. Although there has been a reduction in prenatal mortality, from 16.2 per cent in 1995 to 14.9 per cent in 1997, the reasons are related to changes in the structure of infantile mortality. There has been an increase in the number of intrauterine infections and congenital anomalies, from 14.4 per cent in 1990 to 20.5 per cent in 1997.

149. The main reasons for children's death during the first year of life include the unsatisfactory health of the mother, a high level of morbidity among newborn babies, complications in breastfeeding, and inadequate medical assistance.

150. The Government has adopted a State programme on strengthening prenatal medical assistance for the period 1998–2000 which envisages an improvement in medical assistance to pregnant women and newborn babies, a reduction in maternal mortality and a decrease in prenatal mortality.

151. In the near future, the Government plans to adopt a national programme on strengthening prenatal genetic-medical assistance for the period 1998–2005, with the goal of reducing the hereditary diseases in the Republic. The programme has been approved by the Council of the Ministry of Health.

152. Premature births have remained at a constant level (5.4 per cent of total births in 1997 and 5.9 per cent in 1995).

153. During the past few years, the number of abortions has been reduced and the number of births prevails over that of abortions. In 1993, there were 56.0 births and 56.7 abortions per thousand fertile women and 45.6 and 34.3, respectively, in 1997.

Number of births and abortions, 1985–1997

	Births	*Abortions*
1985	91 788	99 985
1990	77 384	66 502
1991	72 341	58 802
1992	69 349	52 003
1993	66 012	43 254
1994	63 543	58 106
1995	56 411	57 181
1996	51 865	46 010
1997	49 364	37 137

Number of abortions according to age

Age	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Under 20 years	5 456	5 239	4 433	3 676
20–34 years	4 288	4 232	3 246	2 637
Over 35 years	9 763	9 613	9 108	7 089

Rate of abortions per thousand live births according to age

Age	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Under 20 years	86	93	85	74
20–34 years	675	750	626	534
Over 35 years	154	170	176	144

Family planning and reproductive health

154. Pursuant to the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Conference on Population and Development at Cairo and the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing, the Government has given special attention to the problem of reproductive health and family planning.

155. In conformity with the Constitution of the Republic, the Law on Health Care and the Law on the Rights of Children provide for family planning and reproductive health and the right to medical assistance and to information on health.

156. The laws provide for the possibility and the modality of voluntary medical sterilization, voluntary interruption of pregnancy up to 12 weeks, as well as the possibility of artificial fertilization and insemination and medical assistance to persons with venereal diseases.

157. The legislation in force offers the right to medical assistance and prenuptial consultations related to marriage and family planning.

158. A special assistance programme for the promotion of reproductive health has been created through a network of family planning offices in the district centres. The Republican Centre of Family Planning offers medical services, as well as information and training on issues related to sexual and reproductive health.

159. During the past years, the number of women using contraceptives has increased, as can be seen in the table below.

Use of conception methods
(Percentages)

	1993	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Women using intrauterine devices	20.4	21.4	22.3	21.2	25.1
Women using hormonal contraceptives	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.9	3.9

160. Despite the fact that some changes have occurred, family planning and reproductive health remain unresolved problems. The mass media and other forms of training are not used efficiently. One of the main causes is the difficult economic and financial situation of the country. There are not enough resources for funding projects in this field and, as a result, the institutions are focusing on obtaining funds from international organizations.

161. In 1998, the Government plans to elaborate and adopt a national programme on family planning and reproductive health, which will provide for the improvement of medical services, the extension of access to family planning services, training and information to the population, including teenagers, and the preparation of informational materials, brochures, leaflets, etc., in collaboration with the mass media.

Sexually transmitted diseases and the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome

162. During 1990–1997, there was an increase in mortality as a result of sexually transmitted diseases. In 1990, there were 15.8 cases of syphilis per 100,000 people and in 1996, this index had increased 12 times to 200.7. This situation is explained by the bad living conditions, lack of sexual and reproductive education, migration and unemployment.

Number of people affected with sexually transmitted diseases (per 100,000 people, in absolute figures)

	Number of cases per 100,000 people			*Number of people affected*		
	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Syphilis						
Cases acquired by accident	174.4	200.7	188.4	7 571	8 686	8 126
Including women	170.4	200.2	187.2	3 869	4 538	4 244
Gonorrhea						
Cases acquired by accident	100.3	80.5	70.5	4 353	3 486	3 043
Including women	91.0	72.7	56.6	2 063	1 648	1 248

Number of people infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (in real figures)

	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Total	**3**	**7**	**48**	**484**
Women	2	2	12	109
Pregnant women	–	1	1	13
Live births	–	–	–	6

Alcoholism and drugs

163. During the past five to seven years, the problem of alcoholism has become more frequent among women. Every fifth patient is a woman and this index is the highest in Europe. Of the total number of registered women, 65 per cent were women of child-bearing age, 48 per cent had from 1 to 3 children and 30 per cent were single mothers.

Morbidity as a result of alcoholism per 100,000 people

	1995	*1996*	*1997*
Prevalent in alcoholism	1 533.4	1 372.2	1 352.8
Including women	18.6	18.2	18.0

164. The problem of drug addiction is of growing concern and mostly affects the younger generation. Unfortunately, the data on the number of women who use drugs is not available.

Morbidity as a result of drug use per 100,000 people

	1995	1996	1997
Prevalence of drug use	40.0	50.8	63.1
Incidence of drug use	13.4	20.6	22.3

Female morbidity from different diseases by total number of women

	1990	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
	Registered patients with diagnoses established for the first time					
Malignant tumour	3 905	3 798	3 813	3 609	3525	3 571
Mammary gland	763	876	950	838	892	758
Cervix and placenta	621	601	623	356	504	563
Ovary	197	129	156	190	181	136
Active tuberculosis	566	583	712	730	811	810
Alcoholism	979	730	810	785	733	768
Syphilis	310	1 130	2 522	3 869	4 538	4 244
Gonorrhea	2 262	2 328	2 400	2 063	1 648	1 284
Erosion of the cervix	17 971	17 001	19 562	17 382	17 244	16 362
Menstruation disorders	1 479	2 327	2 599	3 250	3 541	3 649
Female sterility	1 426	3 383	2 450	2 760	1 552	1 359
Complications related to pregnancy	42 225	40 442	45 794	22 014	35 043	52 050

Female morbidity from different diseases per 100,000 women

	1990	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
	Registered patients with diagnoses established for the first time					
Malignant tumour	171	167	168	159	156	159
Mammary gland	33	39	42	37	39	34
Cervix and placenta	27	26	27	25	22	25
Ovary	9	6	7	8	8	6
Active tuberculosis	25	26	31	32	36	
Alcoholism	43	32	36	35	32	34
Syphilis	14	50	111	171	201	189
Gonorrhea	99	102	106	91	73	57
Erosion of the cervix	787	748	861	767	764	730
Menstruation disorders	65	102	114	143	157	163
Female sterility	62	149	107	122	69	61
Complications related to pregnancy	1 850	1 780	2 016	1 942	2 438	1 321

Percentage of women patients with diagnosis established for the first time

	1990	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
Malignant tumours	49	49	50	49	50	49
Active tuberculosis	33	30	32	31	32	32
Alcoholism	18	15	15	16	15	16
Syphilis	45	31	49	51	52	52
Gonorrhea	51	48	48	47	47	42

Article 13. Social privileges

165. The legislation of the Republic establishes that family benefits of material, moral and legal support for the education and raising of children shall continue until the child reaches the age of 18 years.

166. Children from disadvantaged families benefit from the following types of privileges, depending on the income of the family:

(a) A one-time allowance upon the birth of the child;

(b) A monthly allowance for children aged 1.5 to 16 years (the allowance continues for pupils of schools, gymnasiums and lyceums until graduation);

(c) A monthly allowance for single mothers who have children of the above-mentioned age.

167. The allocations are established at the workplace of the mother or of the father, if the mother does not work. In cases where both parents do not work, the allocations are established by the social assistance agencies. Parents who are students benefit from the same privileges.

168. Some of the legislation in the fields of social insurance and pensions is more favourable for women than that of other countries; for example, women have the right to be pensioned earlier with work experience of five years less than men.

169. At the same time, the Law on State Pensions of 27 December 1990 contains a series of provisions regarding the age at which women can receive a pension. For example, according to article 16, women who have three or more children and raise them to a certain age (8 to 10 years) are entitled to receive a pension at an earlier age. Thus, women who gave birth to and raised from 3 to 10 children can receive a pension from 45 to 52 years of age, with the age of entitlement being reduced by from 3 to 10 years.

170. At the same time, for women who gave birth to five or more children, the duration of the work experience necessary for the establishment of a pension is reduced by 5 years, from 20 to 15 years.

171. The pensionable age of mothers of disabled children is reduced by 5 years, to 50 years of age, and the period of caring for a disabled child up to the age of 16 can be included in the work experience, on which basis the right to a pension and its quantum are determined.

172. For a mother who does not work, time for breastfeeding small babies is included in the work experience, up to the age of 3 of each child. For mothers who work during maternity leave, the three years are included in the work experience without restriction.

Article 14. Women in rural areas

173. During the period 1994–1998, 32.5 per cent of the number of graduates of the Agricultural University of Moldova were women, in such specialties as: territorial organization, 38.8 per cent, veterinary medicine, 24 per cent, agronomy, 23.8 per cent. Some 35.2 per cent of the total number of graduates of agricultural colleges were women as well. In the specialty that is usually the domain of men, electric supply of agriculture, women comprise 8.3 per cent of the overall number of graduates of the Electric-Technical College in Roscani; and 20.8 per cent of the graduates of the College of Constructions in Hincesti were women.

174. Women and men have equal rights with regard to obtaining a specialty of their choosing.

175. The transformation of collective enterprises into private farms and other private entities, which as a consequence reduced activities of the social sphere of the State, influenced employment in the villages, in particular the employment of women. Their participation in activities in the public sector has been considerably reduced.

176. As a result of the promotion of agricultural reform, 1,015,800 people obtained the right to ownership of land. At 1 January 1998, 20.4 per cent of them had acquired 19.4 per cent of the land that had to be privatized. Both men and women who work in the agricultural sector have the right to become private owners of land. Some 73.5 per cent of landowners have created 86,700 farm enterprises, whose employees are members of their families. They work in more difficult conditions owing to the lack of funds to purchase equipment to work the land and collect fodder for cattle.

177. Parliament has adopted a decision creating a fund to support farm enterprises and small agricultural businesses in the acquisition of products. The fund will focus on the procurement of fertilizers and seeds, the creation of an infrastructure for assisting agricultural producers in the private sector and the partial compensation of interest rate for loans.

178. In rural areas, women spend more time on housework than men. The main reason for this situation is the low technical level of execution of this work, as well as the traditional distribution of family duties between men and women. Services and medical assistance are less developed in rural areas. In order to have access to these services, women have to travel to other areas, which is inconvenient and costly.

Article 15. Equality before the law

179. As has been already mentioned, equality of men and women before the law is guaranteed by the Constitution. The internal legislation of the State guarantees the equality of women and men even if the laws on personal rights do not stipulate this fact.

180. Both men and women have equal opportunities to defend their rights. Women have as equal rights as men when signing contracts related to ownership.

181. All legislation and jurisprudence is based on the principle of equality of women and men. There are no cases in law of discrimination or legal decisions against women.

182. Women also have equal rights with men to choose or change their living place.

Article 16. Code on Marriage and the Family

183. The Code on Marriage and the Family includes provisions relating to the following: continuous consolidation of the family, the creation of family relations through a marriage between a woman and a man, the education of children and the protection of the mother's and child's interests through all means.

184. Based on equality between men and women, stipulated by the Constitution, they have equal personal and patrimonial rights in family relations.

185. Marriage is registered by State registration bodies. The registration of the marriage is conducted in the interest of the State and society and is aimed at the protection of personal and patrimonial rights and interests of spouses.

186. Only a marriage signed by State organs sets the rights and duties between spouses (article 13 of the Code).

187. The Code does not have any prohibitions or limits related to the sex of persons who marry. The minimal age for a marriage for men is 18 years and for women 16 years. According to article 16 of the Code, the minimal age of a marriage can be reduced in special cases, but by not more than two years.

188. The restrictions on signing a marriage contract are the same for both men and women (article 17 of the Code).

189. Men and women are free to choose the family name that is registered in the marriage certificate. Either of them can preserve his/her family name, take the family name of the husband or add the wife's family name to that of her husband.

190. The spouses enjoy equal rights and duties. The education of children and other issues related to family life are resolved by both of them. Each is free to choose an occupation, profession and home.

191. The income gained by the spouses during the marriage constitutes common property. Spouses have equal rights to possession and use of the income (article 21 of the Code).

192. Spouses are obliged to help each other materially. If the husband is unable to work and needs material support, or the wife is unable to work during pregnancy and after the birth of the child and help is refused, they have the right legally to obtain a means of living from the spouse.

193. Spouses have the same rights to use and distribution of property. Either of them can coordinate this property and the decision to sell it must be by both of them.

194. The goods that belonged to the spouses before marriage as well as those gained by them during the marriage through donation or inheritance are the property of each of them. After divorce, each of them has the right to a share of the fortune of the other spouse. In case of distribution of goods that are in the common property of the spouses, their shares are considered equal. In some cases, the court may not take into account this principle, taking into consideration instead the interests of the children or one of the spouses.

195. While distributing the common property of spouses, the court establishes which goods should be given to each of them. In case one of the spouses is given goods whose value surpasses the share of the other, the other spouse has the right to a corresponding financial compensatio.. (article 22 of the Code).

196. Parents' rights in relations with their children are equal as well. All issues related to the education of children are resolved on the basis of mutual understanding between the

parties. Parents are obliged to take care of their children and to prepare them for social activity. The education of the children is considered an obligation of both parents until the children reach the age of maturity.

197. Both husband and wife have the same right to dissolve the marriage. The legal consequences of the divorce are also equal for both spouses.

198. Chapter XIII contains the regulations on the adoption of children.

IV. Conclusions

199. Throughout the transition period, which has been marked by contradictions between aspirations and possibilities, the Republic has had to resolve a series of problems in the social development process.

200. Under these conditions, the problems faced by women are being resolved and demand the elaboration of a new concept on the role of women in society.

201. The creation of a new concept on increasing the role of women in society was included in a decision of the Government, No. 39 of 15 May 1998. Although the principle of equality between man and woman is included in the Constitution and other legislative acts, unfortunately the content of these often has a declarative character.

202. Regrettably, the legislation in force does not ensure in all cases the protection and observation of women's rights, which is why the Republic needs the assistance of the international organizations.

203. In this context, the adherence of the Republic to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is a first step towards adjusting the national legal framework to conform to international standards.

204. Another way is to seek the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme experts, who have carefully examined the labour and penal legislation of the Republic regarding the protection of equality between men and women.

205. Based on the recommendations of the committee of independent experts referred to in paragraph 121 above, proposals have been submitted to modify the Labour Code (articles 173 and 178) with the aim of providing childcare facilities to mothers.

206. Currently, international experts have to approve the Code on Marriage and the Family which contains new provisions on resolving the problems of equality between women and men.